

Vision and Long-Term Strategic Plan



Vision Statement for the City of Falls Church, Virginia

Adopted by City Council November 27, 2006

In 2025, Falls Church is a small city that respects its citizens and provides personal attention to meeting their needs. It is a wonderful place to live, work, and shop, offering diversity in housing, amenities, and services. Its historic charm reflects the stewardship of residents and their local government. It is built on a human scale, where visitors and residents alike can find everything they need while experiencing the fabric of life in a friendly, close-knit community. Falls Church is a shining example of a city that has been able to retain the benefits of small town life, while remaining financially sustainable, and a full participant in one of our nation's most dynamic metropolitan areas.

The people of Falls Church have built a community that expresses their belief in certain unifying principles:

Successful Development



Falls Church City offers a harmonious mix of residential, commercial, and retail venues due to the community's focus on smart design, walkability, and human scale. Innovative, clear, and enforceable standards are in place that reflect attention to historic preservation, environmental sensitivity, and long-term sustainability. City government works closely with local counterparts to share this vision and ensure that Falls Church retains its distinctiveness and competitiveness in the region. Falls Church's City Center is a focal point where residents and visitors gather to work and play, helping to sustain the City's special sense of community and place.



World Class Public Schools



The Falls Church City public school system is at the heart of our identity as a community. Public schools are why the City was established and have always been central to its success. The people of Falls Church remain committed to providing all children with the tools and skills necessary to achieve personal and professional success in a fast-changing and highly competitive world economy. This requires a continuing focus on outstanding staff, up-to-date facilities, innovative leadership, and the efficient use of resources.



Neighborhood Preservation and Community Life



Falls Church welcomes the participation of its citizens in creating an environment where everyone is a neighbor. City neighborhoods are attractive, pleasant, safe, and welcoming places to live. In Falls Church, people join together to shape their streets, sidewalks, and public spaces. New development is compatible with existing neighborhood aesthetics, density, and scale. City streets and thoroughfares are tree-lined, pedestrian-friendly, and offer visitors and passersby a true window into our community and its values.



Diversity



Falls Church is a place where people of all means and backgrounds are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all aspects of community life. Racial, ethnic, economic, and other facets of human experience enrich the community by providing it with a diverse mix of outlooks and views on world, national, and local issues and problems. In all respects, Falls Church is a vibrant and successful community because it welcomes and promotes diversity.



Environmental Harmony



The people of Falls Church believe protecting, guiding, and investing in their environment is one of their highest callings. The City's public and private development express this belief in tangible ways. Our commitment to parks, open space, and clean waterways has been a hallmark of local government for decades. Likewise, residential and commercial development has long emphasized construction in harmony with the City's manifest natural gifts. Environmentally friendly residential and commercial buildings throughout the City incorporate the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Rating System – the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings.



Innovation



The people of Falls Church are leaders and innovators in many areas of human endeavor. The City capitalizes on this resource by finding and nurturing emerging ideas and bringing them together with public and private capital. Falls Church is one of the leaders among area jurisdictions in evolving and nurturing forward-thinking businesses that combine capital investment with stewardship of our natural resources. The City has a variety of special enterprise zones serving the "green technology entrepreneur" as well as the basic needs of its residents.



World Class Government and Public Outreach



City Staff provide first-class, professional service to an appreciative community. The City Council and City Manager actively reach out to the citizenry to assure that the whole community is engaged in decisions affecting the City's well-being and sustainability. In this pursuit, the Council and City Staff are guided by the core values of accountability, transparency, and responsiveness. Citizens receive accurate and timely information and have every opportunity to be heard and participate in the deliberative process. At the same time, the Council acknowledges its obligation to make the difficult and, at times, unpopular decisions that are necessary to sustain the City's viability and unique small-town quality of life.



A Special Place



Falls Church is a place where people enjoy doing everyday tasks, as well as experiencing diverse cultural, recreational, and civic opportunities. The Falls Church, Tinner Hill, Cherry Hill Farm, the State Theatre, and quaint 19th century homes are alive with historical meaning and testify to the City's rich heritage, which is both respected and enhanced by the 21st century redevelopment of City Center. The City is a magnet for artists, artisans and musicians, with many venues for performances and exhibits. Its dozens of fine restaurants and other eateries make it a destination of choice for residents and countless people from elsewhere in the metropolitan area. The City's vibrant, pedestrian-friendly commercial corridor and City Center includes attractive shops and boutiques, as well as retail stores that respond to every shopper's interests and pocketbook. There is always something going on in Falls Church, whether it be the Saturday Farmers Market, the famous Memorial Day Parade, concerts in the park, or one of many other events.



City of Falls Church Long-Term Strategic Plan for Council Vision Implementation





Successful Development

GOAL 1 City Center Development – Facilitate mixed-use development plans and a review process that provides new goods and services, enhances revenue, and is compatible with the Comprehensive Plan and community values.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Leverage market opportunities and forge public/private partnerships for phased City Center development that creates a vibrant, distinct, sustainable, great place.

GOAL 2 Mixed-Use Development – Facilitate mixed-use development plans and a review process that provides new goods and services, enhances revenue, and is compatible with the Comprehensive Plan and community values.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Seek and encourage redevelopment for areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

GOAL 3 Infrastructure to Support Redevelopment – Build infrastructure that supports Citywide redevelopment that creates a vibrant, distinct, sustainable, great place.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Meet current and future needs for sanitary sewer, water, and storm water facilities.

OBJECTIVE 2 – Plan and implement street improvements to promote pedestrian safety and commercial vitality as well as addressing multi-modal transportation and parking.

GOAL 4 Land Use Tools – Create new land use tools that encourage creative, compatible, and sustainable development.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Develop user-friendly, Web-based, uniform development code that contains innovative zoning tools and community design standards with integration of all development regulations including green building, affordable housing, historic preservation, and transportation.



World Class Public Schools

GOAL 1 General Government/Schools Collaboration – Facilitate collaboration between the City Council and School Board, and between the professional staff of General Government and Schools so that City resources are shared and put to their best and fullest use.

- OBJECTIVE 1 – Establish regular meetings between the City Council and School Board to communicate key issues and coordinate budget and policies.
- OBJECTIVE 2 – Ensure efficient organization of Human Resources by fostering closer functional collaboration between General Government and non-instructional School staffs, to improve service delivery and promote the best allocation of City resources.
- OBJECTIVE 3 – Ensure efficient use of facilities by maximizing the public use of General Government and School recreation facilities, such as gyms, playing fields, parks, and public buildings, for the use and enjoyment of the whole community.



Neighborhood Preservation and Community Life

GOAL 1 Traffic Calming – Preserve the quiet, residential character of neighborhood streets, through traffic calming measures, sidewalks, and effective parking regulations.

- OBJECTIVE 1 – Install new traffic calming features and pedestrian connections in City neighborhoods.
- OBJECTIVE 2 – Protect neighborhoods from parking impacts, through the development, implementation, and consistent enforcement of neighborhood parking regulations.

GOAL 2 Neighborhood-Based Crime Control Programs – Improve safety and security in neighborhoods through closer collaboration with police and citizens.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Actively promote citizen volunteer involvement and partnership with police to reduce property crime in neighborhoods.

GOAL 3 Zoning – Preserve neighborhood character and quality of life through effective zoning regulations.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Create better tools for neighborhood preservation through a comprehensive update of City Zoning Codes.



Diversity

GOAL 1 Affordable Housing – Preserve and develop affordable housing as a means to ensure economic diversity in the City.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Implement the Citywide affordable housing strategy that includes investment, acquisition, and building/development.

OBJECTIVE 2 – Expand housing choices by increasing the number of new affordable housing units and housing and services for low-, moderate-, and middle-income households through inclusionary zoning.

GOAL 2 Attract and Celebrate Diverse Populations – Provide public activities, programs, and events that promote and celebrate the City's diversity.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Use City efforts to improve the business climate, reach out to all businesses, and ensure that the full community is engaged in the civic and business life of the City.

OBJECTIVE 2 - Promote the community's diversity through Citywide events and festivals so that the City is perceived as welcoming to all people.

GOAL 3 Employment and Civic Volunteerism - Recruit people from diverse backgrounds for employment and civic volunteerism.

OBJECTIVE 1 - Ensure that membership on City boards and commissions reflects the full diversity of the community.

OBJECTIVE 2 - Ensure that City workforce and staff leadership reflects the diversity of the community, and that the culture of the City Organization is one that embraces and celebrates the strength that comes through diversity.



Environmental Harmony

GOAL 1 Expand and Improve Parklands - Implement plans and sustain resources to expand and improve City parklands, walking trails, and athletic fields.

OBJECTIVE 1 - Create policies for advance planning and acquisition of open space.

GOAL 2 Regulatory Tools - Protect and improve natural resources through the enforcement of existing regulations, and through the development of appropriate new regulatory tools.

OBJECTIVE 1 - Adopt and implement best practices in watershed management to improve community water quality.

OBJECTIVE 2 - Incorporate "Green" Building Practices into the City building permit process.

GOAL 3 Community Education – Create and implement community education programs on best management practices that achieve environmental harmony.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Develop, implement, and sustain community education and environmental programs to include energy management/reduction and production.

GOAL 4 Green City Facilities – Implement best management practices at City facilities to promote a healthy environment and be more efficient in our use of natural resources.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Use the opportunities of new purchases and construction of new facilities or major renovations of existing facilities to implement green technology.



Innovation

GOAL 1 IT Infrastructure – Build and upgrade Citywide IT infrastructure to support innovation.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Create an environment where IT enhances the delivery of governmental services.

OBJECTIVE 2 – Undertake cooperative ventures with the private sector that are scalable for the future, to facilitate expansion, growth, and new technologies such as Wi-Fi.



World Class Government and Public Outreach

GOAL 1 Civic Engagement – Provide citizens with meaningful, relevant, and convenient ways to participate in local government.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Provide opportunities for groups and individuals to share ideas, inform government decisions, and actively participate in civic life.

GOAL 2 Government Accessibility – Provide City services in form and function in a manner that is responsive to citizen needs.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Provide simple and intuitive access to public services and information.

OBJECTIVE 2 – Adopt best practices to ensure a positive customer experience.

GOAL 3 High Performance – Cultivate a customer-driven focus for the City organization, in which leadership, initiative, diversity, and teamwork are celebrated, and high performance is expected and rewarded.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Monitor, improve, and execute the City's "pay for performance" pay plan to ensure it is equitable and provides measurable results.

OBJECTIVE 2 – Provide systematic and ongoing opportunities for professional development, training, ethical cultural development, and promotion.

OBJECTIVE 3 – Ensure accountable, transparent, and responsive service by achieving work plan goals and objectives.

GOAL 4 City Hall – Reshape City Hall to make it more accessible and “user friendly” for the public, and enhance its visual appeal in a way that reflects its position at the center of civic life of the City.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Lead an effective public decision-making process for the redesign/relocation of City Hall.

GOAL 5 High-Performing Water Utility – Maintain a high-performing Water and Sewer Utility that supports economic growth within its service territory in the County and City, and provides responsive customer service.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Adopt performance measures to track progress in reducing costs and improving service to customers.

GOAL 6 Strengthen Children and Families – Provide a comprehensive system of human services that promotes health, independence, and personal growth for all City residents.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Create a structure that promotes collaboration among all prevention and intervention service providers.

OBJECTIVE 2 – Promote the personal growth and well-being of youth and families through a comprehensive and coordinated array of community and school-based services.



A Special Place

GOAL 1 Visual Aesthetic Identity – Create a clear and distinct visual aesthetic identity that differentiates the City.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Create and maintain attractive and distinct entranceways and commercial corridors to the City.

GOAL 2 Artistic Venues – Increase the number of venues for artistic performance display.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Encourage the development of public/private venues for artisans and artists to work and to showcase their work.

GOAL 3 Festivals and Events – Develop, promote, and maintain festivals and special events that celebrate the City's unique character.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Plan, organize and support a variety of quality communitywide special events each year.



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www.fallschurchva.gov

Policy of Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Disability

The City of Falls Church does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its employment practices or in the admission to, access to, or operations of its services, programs, or activities. Letha Flippin, 300 Park Avenue, Falls Church, Virginia 22046, has been designated to coordinate compliance with the ADA non-discrimination requirement.

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